3:Will and Spinden E-5 (1905) 1906
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648 Among a number of other customs, was treaty making with other tribes. This was well described by Henry who accompanied the Mandans and Hidatsa when they went to make a treaty with the Cheyennes. Most of the people went on these treaty visits; the band marched in a procession of fixed order and a number of ceremonial objects were carried exposed throughout the march. The party was met with great ceremony by the new allies and its members were taken into their houses. Several days of ceremonial feasting occurred and finally the head chief of each party adopted a son from the other tribe. After this there was more feasting and several days of trade between the two bands, when both returned home.

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597 The adoption of sons occurred also among the different families. Maximilian describes the adoption of a "medicine son" to whom a sacred pipe was given. The man chose his adopted son through a dream. The new pipe was consecrated and gifts were showered upon the son's family by the adopted father and his relatives. A dance and feast was then held. This custom was prevalent over all the Missouri region.

838 There were a number of men who dressed and acted like women and were treated in every way as such. These men claimed to follow this life by an order from the spirits given to them in a dream.

567 Catlin says that the Mandans did not have slaves and there is no mention of them elsewhere. The Arikara, however, had a regular slavery system, and the Crows made slaves and sold them on the Missouri. The Mandans were very good at the sign language so Maximilian tells us. They were expert swimmers, and collected their whole supply of wood by swimming out and towing in the drift wood at the time of the spring break-ups.

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511 In point of general culture the Mandans were superior to any of their immediate neighbors, surpassing even the other sedentary people, the Hidatsa and Arikara. Catlin says that they had advanced far in the arts of manufacture and had more comforts and luxuries than other tribes. When Verendrye saw them he, too, was struck by their superior skill. He said that the Mandans dressed leather and worked in feathers better

4: Lowie E-5 (1910-1911) 1913
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feasted their fathers for twelve nights. My informant received a tin rattle, as his father had been one of the singers, but, having a bad voice, he gave it to another man who was a better singer. When the new members paraded about, the villagers called them by name, and said, "You Black Mouths, die soon, for you are the bravest of the societies." The members put black paint on the lower part of the face, and black stripes on the body. If a dog came near them during a parade, a Black Mouth who had shot an enemy was permitted symbolically to refer to his deed by shooting the dog.

Bull Society.

During their dance the members of the Bull organization (mēro'k ō'xat'e) wore, according to Maximilian, the upper part of the skin of a buffalo head with the horns and the long hairs of the neck. Two men, the bravest of all and pledged never to retreat from an enemy, wore together with the horns a complete representation of a buffalo head; this mask was provided with artificial eyeslits, surrounded by iron or tin rings. One woman attendant walked about during the dance, offering to the two mask-wearers water from a bowl. This woman was clad in a fine new suit of bighorn skin, and her face was painted with vermilion. The Bulls were the only society to use wooden whistles. They had a piece of red cloth fastened to the back, as well as the representation of a buffalo tail, and carried weapons in their hands. The two mask-wearers kept on the outside of the other dancers, and imitated the voice and actions of bulls, their shy wheeling over towards one side, their manner of looking about in all directions, etc. During the performance of the Bull dance witnessed by the Prince, there were nine dancers, who discharged their guns immediately on entering the Fort. Only one of them wore the complete buffalo head, the rest wore pieces of the skin of the forehead, a pair of cloth sashes, and an appendix decorated with feathers, which represented the tail; they carried shields decorated with red cloth, and long, beautifully ornamented lances.[1] A reproduction of Bodmer's drawing of the Bull dance in Maximilian's Atlas is presented in Fig. 12.

Wounded-face had heard that long ago a Mandan, who had a buffalo front leg in place of one arm, founded the Bull society. My informant said that only a few wore the piece of buffalo head skin with horns, some others merely dressed their hair in bunches in front. Still others covered their face with a mask, formed by fastening a tanned skin painted yellow over the

[1] Maximilian, II, 315.

10: Neill #4(no date) 1884 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

175 they are represented as a treacherous, deceitful people, always
648 taking advantage of their neighbors, and favoring the Sioux when they come to war this way, and frequently intermix with them to annoy the Mandans and Big Bellies.

SIGN LANGUAGE.

201 This language is entirely different from the natives of this place, and it is only by signs that they usually communicate with each other, excepting a few among them who understand each other's language. It serves as interpreter upon any affair of importance. It is surprising how dexterous all these natives of the plains are, in the art of communicating their ideas by signs. They will hold conference, for several hours together, upon different subjects, and during the whole time not a single word will be pronounced upon either side, and still they appear to comprehend each other perfectly well. This mode of communication appears to be quite natural to them, other difficult events are performed with the greatest ease and readiness. They never seem to be at loss, or in want of a sign to express their meaning.

COURTESY TO STRANGERS.

648 Soon after our arrival, there was a great uproar occasioned
721 by the unexpected visit of six Pawnees, from their own vil-
728 lage, sixty leagues below this, on the banks of the same (Missouri) river. They were sent upon an embassy to treat for peace. It appears that last spring, some of these people had accompanied a war party of Sioux who came here and killed five Mandans. The latter nation, in company with the Big Bellies (Gros Ventres,) soon after returned the visit, and not finding the Sioux, on their return killed two Pawnees, but this did not satisfy them. They had informed the Pawnees that they might expect a more formal visit the ensuing fall; that both the Mandans and Big Bellies were determined to exterminate every Pawnee they could find, and lay their villages even with the ground.

To avoid this storm, the latter thought prudent to sue for
[202] peace. A messenger was instantly dispatched to the upper villages to give information of their arrival. In the meantime the strangers were very hospitably entertained, conducted into a hut, and presented with corn and beans, dried meats, etc. All were now silent for some time, awaiting the determination of the Big Bellies.

ARRIVAL OF GROS VENTRES.

The Big Bellies[1] in a short time, arrived on horse-back; about thirty men came down full speed; they brought down an inter-

[1] [Category 116, p. 335.-A.]